

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 5**

**DATE:**

**SUBJECT:** Reports of Significant Developments and Activities  
Ending on June 7, 2000

**FROM:** William E. Muno, Director  
Superfund Division

**TO:** Francis X. Lyons  
Regional Administrator

David A. Ullrich  
Deputy Regional Administrator

The activities listed below are organized by site-specific activities and training/conferences:

**SITE-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

**Response (Pipeline Failure), Wolverine Pipeline Company,  
Jackson, Michigan**

On June 7, 2000, United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) Kurt Grunert and Ralph Dollhopf received notification of a pipeline failure in Jackson, Michigan. The OSCs mobilized to the scene and met with Michigan State Police, Backman Township officials, and representatives from the Wolverine Pipeline Company to assess the situation. A 16-inch pipeline broke, due to unknown causes at this time, causing a release of approximately 75,000 gallons of unleaded gasoline. The gasoline migrated from the surrounding saturated soil into a small drainage ditch. The drainage ditch flowed into unnamed creeks and small ditches that lead to the Grand River approximately 1 mile away. The Wolverine Pipeline Company mobilized 2 cleanup contractors to contain the spill. Contractors are utilizing booms, overflow dams, skimmers, and vacuum trucks to collect the spilled materials. Approximately 40,000 gallons of gasoline and 30,000 gallons of water have been collected and stored in above-ground storage tanks owned by the Company. Approximately 450 families in a one square mile area

surrounding the spill source were evacuated by the Michigan State Police after the Governor declared a state of emergency.

The OSCs, along with the State and local Officials and potential responsible parties, are working around the clock to contain the spill and prevent the gasoline from entering the Grand River. The OSCs are also providing air monitoring in 5 residential areas. All parties agreed that an investigation to determine the cause of the spill will take place when the situation is stabilized and working conditions are safe.

Contacts: Kurt Grunert (734-692-7684)  
Ralph Dollhopf (734-692-7682)

#### **Complaint Filed, Ventura Foods, Alberta Lea, Minnesota**

On May 30, 2000, U.S. EPA, Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention, issued an Administrative Complaint against Ventura Foods, Alberta Lea, Minnesota, for failing to immediately notify the National Response Center (NRC) and the Minnesota State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) of a release of 1000 - 1500 pounds of ammonia, and failing to provide a written follow-up report to the SERC as soon as practicable after the release. Ammonia is a Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act hazardous substance with a reportable quantity (RQ) of 100 pounds. This release was 10 - 15 times the RQ. The NRC and SERC were notified approximately 22 hours after constructive knowledge of a release of an RQ of ammonia. The release occurred when a pressure relief valve on their ammonia refrigeration system failed. In addition, Ventura Foods failed to provide a Tier II form to the SERC and their local fire department regarding the storage of 8,600 pounds of ammonia for the 1996 and 1997 reporting years. A \$302,529 penalty is proposed. Ventura Foods has 30 days to respond to the Complaint.

Contact: Ruth McNamara (312-353-3193)

#### **Landfill Surveyed (Radioactive Contamination), Elgin, Illinois**

On May 23, 2000, using Global Positioning System equipment connected to a gamma radiation survey meter, staff of U.S. EPA Region 5's removal program began a characterization of a

landfill in Elgin, Illinois. The site is known to contain pockets of elevated thorium soils, some substantial. It is believed that this material came from a thorium contaminated construction project in the Streeterville area of downtown Chicago. That site is believed to be connected to the Lindsay Light II site, which was an ore processing facility used to obtain thorium for gas mantles around 1910 to 1940. Once survey results are analyzed, potentially responsible parties will be directed to drill and do subsurface measurements to assess the extent and degree of contamination. Based upon those results, U.S. EPA may direct a removal action be performed.

Contacts: Verneta Simon (312-886-3601)  
Fred Micke (312-886-5123)

**Planning Inspection, Rockwell International Corp. (Allegan Plant) Superfund Site, Allegan, Michigan**

On May 22, 2000, the U.S. EPA remedial project manager and U.S. EPA's contractor for the fund-lead remedial investigation/ feasibility study at the Rockwell International Superfund site in Allegan, Michigan, conducted a site planning inspection. During the planning inspection, the site team staked out sampling locations for upcoming field work; evaluated the condition of existing monitoring wells and piezometers; collected groundwater elevations; and, identified monitoring well and piezometer locations that contained light non-aqueous phase liquid (LNAPL).

During the inspection the site team discovered that one monitoring well was destroyed, and that several monitoring wells and piezometers will require redevelopment. Groundwater elevations were seasonally higher and LNAPL was detected in one piezometer at a significantly greater thickness than previously detected. Based on the inspection and on-going discussions, the contractor is adjusting plans to insure that any wastes that are located entirely below the water table will be identified during the field investigation. The field investigation is expected to begin in July 2000 and take approximately 2 months to complete.

Contact: Karen Cibulskis (312-886-1843)

**TRAINING/CONFERENCES****Meeting, Federal Emergency Management Agency Comprehensive HAZMAT Emergency Response - Capability Assessment Program, Chicago, Illinois**

On May 30-31, 2000, the quarterly Comprehensive HAZMAT Emergency Response - Capability Assessment Program (CHER-CAP) meeting was held at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 5 Office in Chicago, Illinois. The U.S. EPA Region 5 participants were Tom Geishecker (Emergency Response Branch), and Cheryl McIntyre and Glenn Cekus (Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention). The CHER-CAP Program involves a FEMA initiative to conduct an intensive Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) exercise planning and training program that is hosted by an active Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). The program initially focuses on HAZMAT response as provided at a hospital or other medical facility and works its way back to the LEPC emergency operations plan, which is also tested in the exercise. Most of the exercises conducted thus far involve transportation related HAZMAT exercise scenarios. After the meeting, Ms. McIntyre, Mr. Cekus, and Mark Horwitz, Chief, Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP), discussed the relationship of this program to other exercises planned in the future by OCEPP.

Contact: Glenn Cekus (312-353-6449)

**Computer Aided Management Emergency Operations Training, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois**

On May 24-25, 2000, John Elkmann, of Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention, presented two days of the Computer Aided Management Emergency Operations training at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. A class of 15 emergency planners and responders attended.

Contact: John Elkmann (312-353-8186)

cc: Steve Herman (OECA)  
Barry Breen (OECA)

Tim Fields (OSWER)  
Steve Luftig (OSWER)  
Larry Zaragoza (OSWER)  
Region 5 State Superfund Coordinators  
Division/Office Directors  
ORA State Coordinators  
Regional Team Managers